

An 1828-29

Inaugural Dissertation
on

The Digestive Organs;

Submitted to the examination
of the

Revd. Dr. Beasley, Provost.

And the

Trustees and Medical Professors
of the

University of Pennsylvania.

In the Degree of

Doctor of Medicine.

By J. Hanckel Almon,

of Philadelphia.

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The Digestive Organs.

It is, I believe, acknowledged by every one, that the Digestive Organs are of more importance, and hold greater ascendancy over the animal economy than any others - and when a morbid change takes place in their functions or structure, the whole machine is liable to become disordered.

How carefully and sedulously then, should we attend to them, and strictly observe and correct the least deviation from a healthy action.

Fully impressed with the importance of taking these organs into view, I beg leave to make a few remarks on the advantages derived from keeping them steadily before us, and of enumerating some of the consequences which arise from neglecting this important object. By paying strict attention to them, many of the most obstinate diseases are overcome, which resisted every other means, and many unpleasant complaints are avoided.

It would be of great moment indeed, if the medical world at large would adopt the language

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of Dr. Chapman, and say, when they are called upon to treat a disease - "What connection has this complaint with the Digestive Organ?"

In private life we frequently see that attention which is due to the daily evacuation of the bowels, and which cleanliness as well as health requires, entirely neglected. This is particularly applicable to females, who, sometimes under a notion of false delicacy, at others for want of opportunity, and from neglect, &c. refuse the calls of Nature, which, when persisted in for some time, induces a torpid and inactive state of the bowels, and the desire to go to stool is completely removed. This being accompanied with irregularities and improprieties in diet, which is a necessary consequence in the polite world, a train of evils follow: - The appetite is impaired - indigestion with its concomitant symptoms, as languor, listlessness, debility, headache, severe pains in the balls of the eyes, and many intractable complaints arise.

Thus we see what mischievous consequences ensue from what is generally supposed a trivial incident. Whom are we to blame for all this? Surely parents, from whom we receive our first notions of what are right and wrong, have a great hand in this growing evil.

If mothers, who have the guidance of our infantile days, would instil into the minds of their children the propriety, nay, the absolute necessity of visiting daily the Temple of Eloacina, and of observing a rigid adherence to diet, (particularly in those of a delicate habit,) we should soon have the pleasure of seeing our rising generation spring up to maturity with ~~that~~ robust vigour and rosy health, which is becoming a good and wise nation.

To enumerate all the diseases which are either kept up or induced by a disordered state of these organs, would be a tedious and difficult task. Indeed, there is hardly one which is not aggravated by this cause.

It is admitted by all, that disorders of the chylific
system will affect the whole system, but
the effects of these disorders have not received that at-
tention which they demand.

"They may produce in the nervous system," says Mr.
Abernethy, "a diminution of the functions of the
brain, even so as to occasion Apoplexy and Hema-
plesia, or a state of excitation causing delirium,
partial nervous inactivity and insensibility, or
the opposite state of irritation and pain. They
may produce in the muscular system weak-
ness, tremors and palsy, or the contrary affections
of spasm and convulsions. They may excite fever,
by disturbing the actions of the sanguiferous sys-
tem, and cause various local diseases by the ner-
vous irritation which they produce, and by the
weakness which is consequent on nervous dis-
order, or imperfect chylification. Be if local dis-
eases occur in a constitution deranged in the
manner which I have described, they will be =

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and only after death has come, and may be in the lungs,
but it is apt to shoot to the right lung - lungs; and, in the
greater number of instances, it passes into the lungs of the
other lung.

There are many instances of injury to the lungs, and many
frequently find that the lungs have been injured by an
injury to the chest with a ribbed chest plate of the lungs.
The findings of these deaths are as follows: the
lungs are in which the alveoli have been completely
destroyed. There is a rupture of the lungs, and the lungs
are very much injured, and the lungs are very much
inflamed, and indeed similar cases are very
many persons.

While attending the English Hospital, I was a patient
in a case of the lungs, and found that the lungs were
very much injured by the lungs, and the lungs were
very much injured, and the lungs were very much
inflamed, and indeed similar cases are very
many persons. The lungs were very much injured, and
the lungs were very much injured, and the lungs were
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inflamed, and indeed similar cases are very
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...very red & sore, & being spotted & raw. The patient being
very nervous the wound the wound, & was discolored & raw
he was quite cured.

Until lately, the English physicians paid very little at-
tention to gonorrheal diseases, and were not very intimately
acquainted with the subject. Now, however, physicians
have given their attention, and have paid more attention
to it in the last 10 years, and the venereal has been
greatly improved by many others.

"First venereal diseases," says Dr. Keen, "are those
which are the result of the venereal virus, and are
the most common of all diseases. They are characterized by a
discoloration of the skin, with the view of removing the same
incident, but consequent disease of the skin." He then relates
the case of a patient in St. Bartholomew's Hospital, who had
the best effects of the venereal virus, and had been in the hospital and
suffered in London, and in a paper that it was a
very bad case of the venereal virus. There was an ulceration in the
venereal virus, and in the venereal virus, of a very
very bad case of the venereal virus, and in the venereal virus.

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It is well known that the per capita consumption of
tobacco in the United States is about 1.5 pounds
per year. (This is based on the average consumption of
tobacco in the United States for the year 1960.)
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"Too lean or too spare a diet often produces consequences not unlike to those of too full or too rich a diet. In too lean or too spare a diet, there is not sufficient to supply the wants of the various secretions: the wear and tear of the animal machine, - and thus the vital principle languishes with the movements to which it is connected; whilst by too full or too rich a diet, the digestive functions are so much oppressed, that a sufficient quantity of nutriment cannot be prepared from the ingesta for the general support; and here too emaciation follows."

"This oppression and consequent debility of the digestive functions, is more apt to be induced by variety of meats than by any other cause, as variety inclines us to overload our stomachs, by exciting an artificial appetite. Every man knows that enough consists not in filling the stomach, but in taking sufficient to maintain nature; and, therefore, they would do well to bear in mind the precept of Hippocrates, who says, "The quantity of meat ought

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not to be appointed by weight, number or mea-
sure, but by sense, and ability of our stomachs."
Solon being at the Wise-men's feast, said, "humi-
lium, imo divinum bonum est nulli veri ali-
mento; proximum vero et naturale quod a mi-
nimo."

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